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CBS Witness Won't Recant

Killing by Viet Cong Described to Jury

Associated Press

A NEW YORK, Jan. 16—Former CIA analyst Samuel A. Adams conceded today that he described Viet Cong militiamen in 1967 as "non-combatants," but stood by his assertion that the communist militiamen who were not counted as enemy soldiers killed thousands of American soldiers.

Adams faced his first day of cross-examination in retired Gen. William C. Westmoreland's \$120 million libel suit against CBS. As a \$25,000 consultant to the network, Adams helped prepare "The Uncounted Enemy: A Vietnam Deception," a 1982 television documentary that Westmoreland says was a libelous attack on his reputation.

The broadcast echoed charges that Adams had been making for more than a decade: that the U.S. military command in Saigon, which Westmoreland headed from 1964 to 1968, deliberately understated enemy strength at the height of the war in order to satisfy domestic political opinion.

A key part of Adams' argument has been that Westmoreland's staff arbitrarily and baselessly insisted in 1967 on eliminating entire categories of enemy forces, including militia and support troops, from the "order of battle," or official estimate of enemy strength. Adams and CBS said the military reported enemy strength of fewer than 300,000 troops when the actual number was more than 500,000.

Under questioning today by Westmoreland attorney David Dorsen, Adams acknowledged that he wrote a memo in 1967 describing the militia forces as "non-combatants."

"Militia largely did not mix into firefights," Adams testified. However, he added that, "as I knew then, they made mines and booby traps," and he said those weapons accounted for an estimated one-third of American casualties.

Westmoreland has testified that he demanded removal of the militia forces from the order of battle in 1967 because they consisted of "old men, women and young boys" who posed no military threat.